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SIPDIS

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TAGS: [KMPI](#) [KPAO](#) [KDEM](#) [BA](#)

SUBJECT: MEPI INTERNEWS JOURNALISM TRAINING ON TRACK

1. Post arranged a series of meetings on April 19-22 for visiting Internews Network Vice President Jeanne Bourgault and Middle East Regional Director Karim Alrawi to finalize plans for MEPI-funded journalism training in Bahrain. The Minister of Information has approved the training and he has requested that Internews partner with the Bahrain Journalists Association. The first training workshop, on basic skills for journalists, is scheduled for May 22-26, and follow-on training on internet skills and media management are planned for the fall/winter. Poloff will nominate a Bahraini attorney to attend a course on media law in July.

2. Internews staff and PAO engaged with senior Ministry of Information staff, an editor in chief and two managing editors, Mass Communications faculty at the University of Bahrain (recipients of a MEPI university linkage), and practicing journalists, all of whom stressed that journalism training is desperately needed in Bahrain. In addition to developing basic skills, journalists need expertise in covering democratic institutions, such as Bahrain's new parliament, as well as business and economic issues, given the ongoing negotiations for a Free Trade Agreement. Although this was their first visit to Bahrain, the Internews staff worked quickly and effectively with their Bahraini counterparts to lay the groundwork for the upcoming training. Post was pleased with their professionalism and responsiveness to program suggestions and logistical requests.

3. During a meeting with the Communications Department at the University of Bahrain, Internews VP Bourgault provided needed expertise and advice on equipment purchases and training for the University's new Media Center (currently under construction). The Media Center will train Bahrain's next generation of media professionals and emphasize the importance of freedom of speech in a democracy; support for the Center is in post's MPP. We appreciate Bourgault's offer of help to the University, especially her quick follow-on emails. Post will be submitting a request shortly to NEA/PI for a MEPI Small Grant to the University of Bahrain to support the new campus radio station, which will be housed in the Media Center.

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